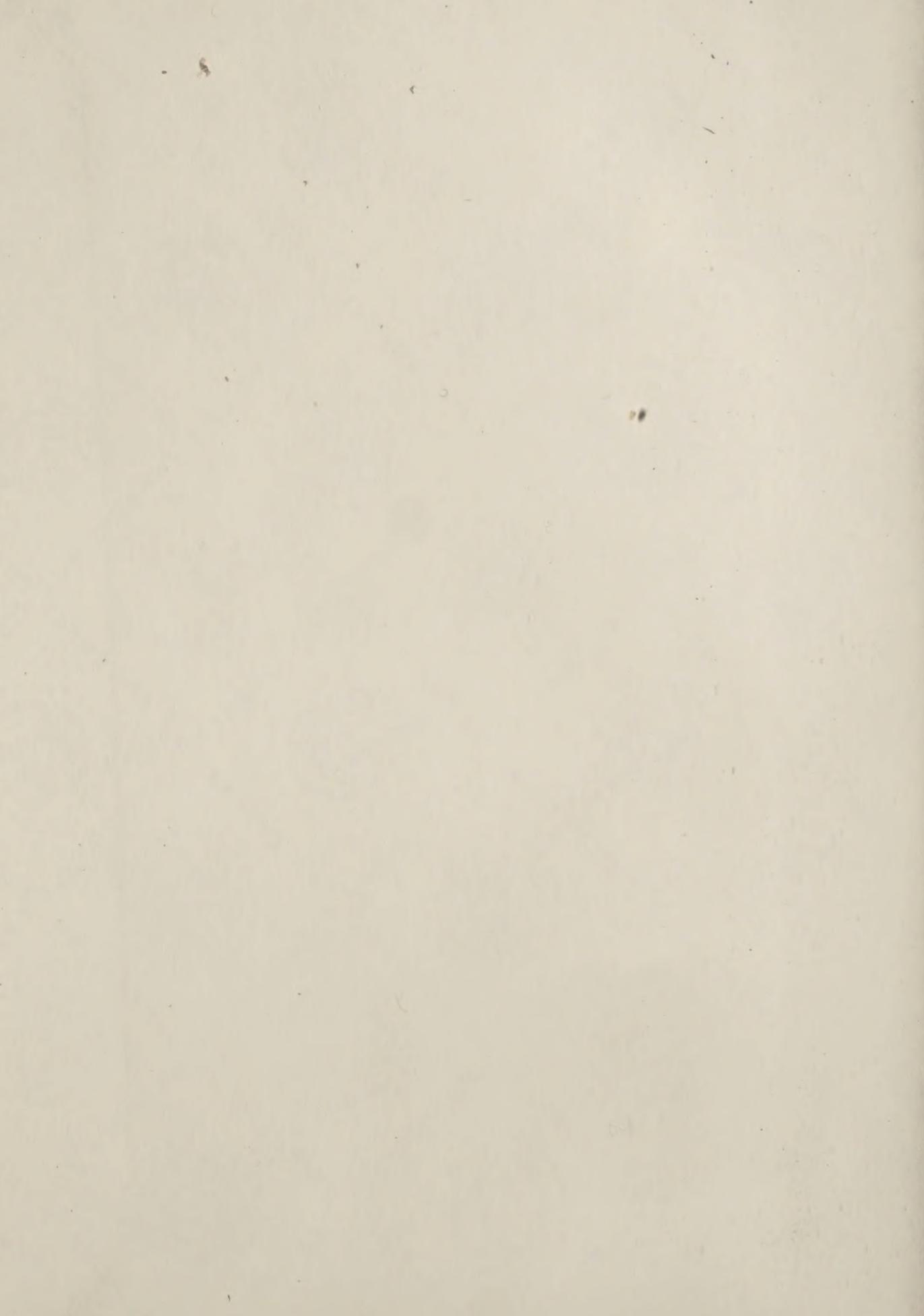


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Norton,  
M. D.

—BY—

ALVIN CAMPBELL.



NEW YORK:

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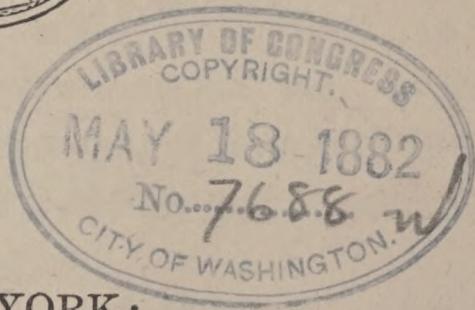
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# JOHN NORTON, M. D.

BY

ALVIN CAMPBELL.



NEW YORK:  
W. B. SMITH & CO.,  
BOND STREET.

1882

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# JOHN NORTON, M. D.

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## CHAPTER I.

IT was a bright day in June, 18—, that the citizens of W—— first saw Dr. Norton's shingle. The man himself had been visible to the inhabitants of the town only a few hours.

Four years before the above unnamed date, John Norton and Alfred Amesbury were graduated at a New England college. That same autumn, Norton had commenced the study of medicine, and Amesbury, the study of theology.

Better friends than these two could not have been found among all those who followed the fortunes of that ancient filibuster of Trojan notoriety. They had disputed about theology and wrangled over Butler, Cousin, and Kant, but, at the end of their school-days, each of them found the other very dear to him. It is true they were both Pennsylvanians, a fact which might account for their attachment, as lonely Freshmen, but scarcely for the friendship which existed between them as seniors.

At the conclusion of his theological course, Amesbury had accepted a call from the Presbyterian church

of W—, a town in Pennsylvania, on the beautiful Susquehanna, and had been here one year.

Norton, having taken his medical degree, and spent a year among the hospitals in London and Paris, now, at the urgent request of his friend, had come to practise medicine in W—.

As he sat in his snug office on the main street of the pretentious little town, on this, the first day of his professional life, and beheld the glorious sun flinging its healing waves so gratuitously abroad, he could not suppress the thought that, after all, he, John Norton, with his diplomas and medical digests, might be somewhat of an impertinence in such a world ; and it was not calculated to dispel this impression for him to remember, as he did, how vast the realm of the unknown in medicine is, as compared with the known ; the mystery that, in spite of all the centuries of investigation, still enshrouds some of the most destructive maladies.

But these somewhat morbid thoughts were abruptly interrupted by the appearance of a hatless and excited boy, who said, "Be you the new doctor ?"

"Yes ; what's the matter ?"

"Why, dad got almost killed in the saw-mill, and the preacher who was going past as the men brought him home, told mam to send for you !"

Taking up his hat and some surgical tools, Norton

and the boy were soon at the house of the wounded man.

The great chain by which the logs are drawn up in a steam saw-mill, getting loose and recoiling, it had struck the man with tremendous force, breaking the femur, and badly lacerating the flesh.

With hopeful words and a skilful manipulation of splints and bandages (for surgery was Norton's forte) his patient was soon as well cared for as if he had been an inmate of Guy's Hospital.

"No strong food, Mrs. Kiefer. A little milk or broth, and, with skilful nursing, your husband will come through this all right. His system does not appear to have been depleted by rum, a fact which greatly enhances his chances of recovery."

Assuring the woman that he would call again in the evening to see how his patient rested, Dr Norton returned to his office. Dubiety as to his right to a place in the world did not again invade his thoughts, for work, the great thaumaturgist, had dispelled his doubts. Had not he been of some use in the world this very day? No mere impertinence, but a veritable helper of his kind, a mender of things, and hence, having as good a right to be reckoned an entity as the tinker or cobbler; and, in this world where so many things get broken, this was surely right enough.

Instinctively the old friends went forth in the even-

ing to walk. Your healthy man always rejoices in the unmeasured and uncontaminated sweetness of the outdoor world. Thought flows freer, the feelings are more exuberant. The scenery about W—— is fine at all times, comparable, doubtless, to much that is counted good in the landscape of Switzerland: *this* evening it was superb. The verdure-clad spurs of the Alleghenies, the fertile, clover-scented fields, alive with the intermittent glow of innumerable fire-flies, the rippling Susquehanna, silver-plated here and there by the light of a half-grown moon, all made a picture of much beauty.

But it was not to revel in such natural environments, magnificent as they might be, that these friends went forth, but *to enjoy each other*; for, after all, there is nothing in mere nature from which so much of joy and refreshment can be had as from a genuine human soul. The highest Alpine peak is but an ash-heap compared with a man. And O, the delight there is in contemplating him, if the one beholding happens also to be verily a man. For men are discovered by the light that glows within the seeker's soul, rather than by the lantern with which Diogenes sought to find his man. The finding of a continent were a small matter for congratulation to any navigator of life's ocean, compared to the good fortune of him who has found a veritable man. Amesbury and Norton had each made

such discovery, and hence had experienced endless delight in exploring their possessions. Norton had seen more of the world than Amesbury, and was of quicker, and perhaps deeper, insight than his friend. Amesbury was a fine logician, and no hound ever followed a rabbit more unerringly than he followed the steps in a syllogism until he had bagged the conclusion.

"Well, Dominie, they have not made you D.D. yet, have they?"

"No, thanks to my good angel, I have escaped that infliction. The malady is like cancer, it very rarely attacks people until they are beyond their prime, when they have entered their second childhood, and are again 'pleased with a rattle, tickled with a straw.'"

"They all seem to live through, and rather enjoy the infliction," remarked Norton.

"Yes, unfortunately; indeed if you should hear all the reasons urged by some men why they should be dubbed, you would imagine their lives depended on the addition of those letters. Abraham could not have been more importunate when pleading for a doomed city, than are some of these in their wrestlings for a couple of D's, and it matters little how insignificant the college that grants such doubtful honors may be. Moreover, the same much-abused D's have been made articles of barter. Raise five hundred dollars for one

of these impecunious institutions, and the thing is done. It is really amusing to hear Talbot, who is connected with a lean college out West, describe the ins and outs of this business."

"It might be amusing," remarked Norton, "were it not for the pitiable manifestation of weakness on the part of those whom the world, for its own sake, should hold in highest respect."

"And who," said Amesbury, "for the most part, and notwithstanding such peccadilloes, are worthy of respect. Such small vanity I judge to be far less destructive to the man within than that insatiable greed for money which is fermenting in the minds of so many. Your average doctor, for example."

"Now you are at your old dodge of being personal in argument. I want you to know that I have developed a fearful muscle in that London Boxing Club."

"Who cares for that? You will find Yankee muscle as much superior to the British article as it was in 1812. But, bad as your trade is, I have sometimes wished I had chosen it and gone about mending the bodies of men, rather than the so often unsuccessful business of making them morally better. You fellows find a man all broken up, and with a few splints, bandages and sutures, he comes out all right. His innate vitality, the *vis-medicatrix* that is in him, does the business, while here I've been at work with some men a year,

and my predecessors scores of years, without any good result becoming visible. There are no more signs of moral convalescence now than in the beginning. The wounds made by passions and appetites seem to grow deeper and threaten to culminate in moral *pyæmia*. Sin has left no soul *vis-medicatrix* to fall back upon. We can not 'set' a shattered veracity or 'tie' a soul artery which has been severed by the dagger of lust, and say, 'my friend, lie still a few days, and you will be as good as ever.'"

"It would be nearer the truth if you had said that your eviscerated theological systems have left no room for any moral *vis-medicatrix*; the souls of men have been brought well nigh unto asphyxia with your predestinarian logic and Calvinistic jugglery. Like some quacks in medicine, you give out that man is nearer dead than he is in order to bring life back by some *deus ex machina* arrangement. The only quality your system-makers seem to recognize as left in man, is *inertia*. You have robbed the human will of the divine potentiality of true volition. You give notice to your hearers that they can do no good thing, and then scold them for not doing this very thing."

"But," said Amesbury, "you do not suppose that, unhelped by God, man will originate any good thought or deed?"

"Unhelped by God? What do you mean by such a phrase? Was there ever a human soul unhelped by him? One that he did not help all that such a soul would permit? Reasons, motives for love and right action, God has revealed most plainly. But the love and the right action must emerge from the will, which is the true *ego*. It is *amo*, not *amamus*, in morals, else there can no more be right or wrong in an action than you can ascribe moral meaning to the gyrations of a chip caught in an eddy of yonder brook.

"But what makes the theological outlook most discouraging is the fact that you swear by St. Calvin and all the yet uncanonized worthies that there shall be no change in ecclesiastical formulas. The possibility of growth, which is one of the great evidences of life, is violently denied."

"But," said Amesbury, "the necessity of change implies error, imperfection, and if revealed of God, the Bible, and the legitimate deductions from it, must be entirely true, and hence, do not become a prey to the vandal spirit of improvements."

"I was not speaking of the Bible so much as the interpretations of it, which have been held more sacred than the Bible itself. What I hold is, that there should be growth in the understanding of the Bible. Divine as the book may be, it can not be truer or more divine than the book of nature, and yet

what marvellous progress has been made during a hundred years in the right understanding of *this* book. But here we are like a couple of half-demented schoolmen, discussing abstractions when we should be enjoying the evening and letting our suppers digest. And friend Amesbury, you have not only not attained unto the dignity of a Doctor of Divinity, but I find you unmarried as well, which, for a gentleman of your profession is somewhat remarkable. I thought theologians generally took out matrimonial orders about as soon as they did the ecclesiastical."

"And a most reasonable thing it is, and a 'consummation devoutly to be wished.' "

"A good wife is worth more than a whole Cadmus outfit of empty letters."

"Why, there is one lady in my congregation, the divine sweetness of whose superb womanhood is more potent for God than all the rest of us combined. To all who come within the radius of her influence she is the incarnation of moral beauty. And not to love and delight in the God loved and delighted in by *such* a soul, would seem a double sin."

"Yes," said Norton, "for every such nature is a new revelation of divine things to the world. The truest and most helpful glimpses we get of the infinite heart, are not through any pen pictures, however truly inspired such may be, but are radiations from some

noble human life. For the best alphabet ever invented can give truth but a dim expression compared with the revealing power of a living soul. But perhaps," continued Norton, "there were danger of so loving and delighting in such a human representation of divine excellence, as to forget God's claim, especially if she were loving and physically as well as morally beautiful."

"Perhaps so," said Amesbury, somewhat sadly; "and yet I cannot think that any true human love is unfriendly to the love of God. The tendency of all such affection must be heavenward. You might as well say that the child's progress in the spelling-book would be a hindrance to him in the mastery of the third reader."

"I see how it is! No one talks like that until after he has been hit by the treacherous little bowman. How long has this embodiment of all that is lovely in woman had the first mortgage on you? Has there been any article of agreement? When does she take possession?"

"My only fear is that she does not want to take possession."

"Nonsense, *mon ami!* Twenty-seven years old — five feet ten — fine eyes — magnificent side-whiskers — 'Hyperion locks — the front of Jove' — you have only to speak out like a little man, and get her to name the

day that robs me of a friend. But here we are at my worthy landlord's. Will you come in and smoke?"

"No, not to-night."

"Well, then, I will go and see what the *vis-medatrix* is doing for poor Kiefer."

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## CHAPTER II.

NORTON found his patient doing very well, and, in a brief space, was back again to his lodgings; and, as he smoked, he thought of Amesbury, and wondered what kind of a person it might be who had laid such fast hold upon his friend's susceptibilities. And then, as it often had within the past six months, there came before him an image of womanly grace. Should he ever again see the beautiful original whose likeness had been stamped so clearly upon his memory?

Half a year before, when Norton was crossing over from Dover to Calais, an officer of the boat came into the gentlemen's saloon and asked if there was a surgeon present. A lady had been thrown, by a lurch of the vessel, against a door-jamb, and got her shoulder dislocated. After a moment's pause to see if any one else would volunteer, Norton followed the man, and in a few seconds had rendered the needed assistance to his

suffering fellow-voyager. The dignified old lady who had just been made comfortable, introduced herself as Miss Randolph, from the United States, and, turning to a star-eyed girl with a face of Grecian outline and mouth of great sensitiveness and beauty, she said, "Dr. Norton, this is my niece, Mary Randolph." Then, of course, it was in order to withdraw from the narrow confines of the lady's state-room, which Norton did, accepting thanks, but refusing the proffered fee on the grounds that he too was an American.

This was all, except a hat-lifting on the pier; and yet there had been scarcely a day that this girl was not more or less in Norton's thoughts. Should they ever meet again? It was stupid not to have secured the address even at the risk of being thought presumptuous. What navigator, having sighted a lovely island, but would at once mark its latitude and longitude, so that he might come again and revel in its beauty, and perhaps take possession of it.

Imagine Dr. Norton's surprise when, one day, he met at Mr. Kiefer's this very person who had been so often in his thoughts — his fair fellow-traveller on the British Channel. A basket was in her hand, and it was evident she had not come as a gossip, but as a Good Samaritan to this afflicted household.

As a true sister of charity had this vision of beauty appeared in this poor man's dwelling. A gracious

smile of recognition and the touch of a little hand sent a pulsation of gladness through the soul of this man, as the touch of other hands and the smiles of other lips had never done.

Was the aunt well?

"Quite well, and will be glad to see and again thank Dr. Norton for his kindness."

In the evening Norton told Amesbury that he had found an acquaintance, and narrated the incident on the vessel, and the meeting and recognition at Mrs. Kiefer's.

"One is sure to meet Miss Randolph where suffering or need is. I once thought that such work was done only by disappointed spinsters and women upon whose lives some great blight had fallen, but here is one of the brightest and most glad of earth's children delighting in it."

"They are God's angels, sent of Him, no matter whether they were ordained to this heavenly work on Mount Sinai or Calvary," said Norton.

"But I must confess," said Amesbury, "that I like the Calvary-inspired better than the Sinai-compelled angels."

"In the case under consideration, I agree with you entirely," rejoined Norton.

"If you are not too busy, we will call at Mr. Randolph's to-morrow evening."

"Don't ever run the risk of being thought sarcastic

or mercilessly ironical by asking a doctor, with one sick man on his list, if he has 'time' for anything. The trouble is, I have more *time* than patients."

Norton and his friend were received with much cordiality by the Randolph ladies, — Mr. Randolph, who was a coal operator, being away from home; indeed, that gentleman spent most of his time at S—, where his financial interests were located.

The aunt trusted that Dr. Norton would never have cause to regret that he had settled in W—. She was sure that the medical profession furnished many opportunities for doing good, and for sympathizing with distressed people.

"And is it true," said the niece, "that sympathy with the sufferings of his patients unfits the physician for success? Unmans him, as some say? Must he really learn to be cold and unfeeling, before he can do his best as a healer of men?"

"Such has been a somewhat widely-received opinion," said Norton; "but it seems to me that the very reverse of it must be true, and that the more completely the would-be healer can enter into and identify himself with those who are to be healed, the more possibility there is of healing. Many physically morbid conditions have psychological causes, others have mental ramifications, and such cases can only be understood by the deepest intuition, — and how shall such

insight be gained better than by true sympathy? Even in surgery, it is the kind, magnetic touch of the operator that infuses the courage with which to bear and the faith with which to be healed. One human will fortifies another. There is more real healing done by means of human wills, than by the best nostrums in *materia medica*."

"Whether such efficacy for physical healing resides in the human will, or not, it certainly is the place in man where soul healing commences," said Amesbury. "The will is the one fort that did not make an unconditional surrender in the first great invasion by the devil."

"According to some theologians," remarked Mary Randolph, "the guns of this fortification were all spiked."

"Oh, yes; but a more careful examination of the battle-field has revealed the fact that they were only dismounted; and under the direction of the Great Captain, they may be got into position again, and this moral Gibraltar be made more impregnable than in the Adamic campaign."

"I hope, Mr. Amesbury, you have not been giving your friend any biographical sketches of our people here in W—, for that, you know, would rob him of the joy of first discovery," said Mary Randolph.

"No, indeed; he has been as reticent on this most interesting subject as the Delphian oracle."

"My conscious inability to perform adequately the part of a Plutarch for our worthy citizens, would have been sufficient to deter me had there been no other reasons. The Boswell idea of biography — minus the toadyism — is the one that would suit me best. It must be a task of love. I shall never begin until I have found a Johnson."

"I," said Norton, "should prefer, in such a case, that the subject should be a *Miss Johnson*."

"Then, Miss Randolph," said Amesbury, "there is another reason why any such biographical infliction, as you feared I had been perpetrating on my friend, should not be attempted. It can never be a success. No two persons ever find the same man to be the same. Men are like restaurants: we get what we ask for, — what our moral appetite demands. In the presence of one man or woman, all that is best and most admirable in one is brought to the front, and for the time being becomes dominant. In the society of another kind of man he is vulgar, perhaps carnal. My friend will doubtless discover eldorados of character here in W — quite unsuspected by me."

"I hope he will find his Miss Johnson, as I am curious to see what kind of a Boswell he will make," remarked Mary Randolph.

"Oh, I suspect he has already found her, and got several chapters written," said the elderly lady, who

had been greatly enjoying the discussion of the young people, and who, when the gentlemen were about to go, remarked that if it were not for the pain implied in the thought, she would wish Dr. Norton a very large practice. "I can, at least, wish you a most abundant success in curing those you do have."

"Thanks for your kindness. I trust that I shall not altogether disappoint the hopes which my friends have been rash enough to place in me. The success of a physician has not quite the same gloomy outlook as the success of an undertaker."

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### CHAPTER III.

A DOZEN months have brought Dr. Norton more work than in his most sanguine moments he had expected in so brief a space.

What could a year bring to Mary Randolph, but more beauty of all kinds, — a riper and more glorious womanhood, with many opportunities for helpful, loving acts? Along with much that had been cheering and hopeful, the last few days of the year had brought to Amesbury a complication in church work which was somewhat perplexing. And on entering his friend's study one day, at this period, Norton, who was as

quickly conscious of mental impediments in others as he was of physically morbid conditions, exclaimed :

" What is wrong, Dominie? Is it finance, malaria, or love? Here, take a cigar, and cheer up."

" Did you meet a man as you came in? " remarked Amesbury, as he lighted the cigar.

" I met Mr. Boyd."

" Well, he is likely to give me no end of trouble."

" That seems strange. I thought Mr. Boyd was one of the most earnest workers for the right in W—."

" And so he is, and I have learned to love him not a little. The case stands thus: the next Sabbath will be our communion, and Mr. Boyd wishes to become a member of the church. But the trouble is, he does not believe there is any hell. I can not doubt that he is a truly Christian man. His life is very much higher and purer than the average church member. In short, if Mr. Boyd had said nothing about the question of future punishment, he would have been regarded by every member of the session as a fine example of a devoted, God-loving man."

" And why should that fact cause anyone to think differently? " remarked Norton. " Must a man believe in hell before he can believe in heaven, and love and serve the God who dwells there? Is not love better than fear,—a more mighty, soul-uplifting, sin-expel-

ling element in God's moral universe than the reddest hell conceivable? And why go back to fear when we can have love — to the bow and arrow of the savage, when we can have the Winchester rifle with which to slay evil?"

"There can be no doubt about the superiority of love as a moral influence," said Amesbury. "But the fact that it is so high and glorious is what necessitates lower forces in the moral world. Multitudes are on so low a moral plane that only fear can touch them. There is a stone age in the history of some souls, as well as in the history of the human race, and the flint-headed arrow of fear is the only weapon available with such moral savages. In human governments love of right is a much higher, and in itself stronger, motive than fear of penalty, and with many it is the only motive that is felt. Such persons would do right if there were no penalties; but there are those with whom this higher consideration has no influence; hence the necessity of prisons and gallowses."

"Yes, for the good of human society such wretches must be put away for much the same reason that rabid dogs are disposed of, the thought of reformation being almost entirely excluded. But God wants positive results. Love, character, manhood are what he is seeking to develop. And the only conceivable reason why a hell should have a place in God's moral

world, is that in some way it has power to develop manhood. The question is, therefore, does the thought of hell ever, or can it ever, in even the lowest sense, fertilize the roots of love, of that purity of heart, without which no man can see God."

"If it does not fertilize the celestial growth of which you have been speaking, perhaps hell is the moral plough by which the stubborn heart-sod is broken, so that the seeds of love may find lodgment therein, and grow ever more toward higher fruitfulness. Gunpowder never fashioned a block of granite into human shape and manly beauty, and yet that same rude explosive compound may have been of use in breaking loose the stone in the quarry and giving it to the sculptor. So the thought of hell may do some rough work preparatory to the advent of the all-beautifying sculptor, *Love*."

"The objection to all you say is that no such a thing does happen. What bad man was ever made good by condemnation — by punishment threatened or actual? What person ever won another's love by any other means than love? Not by threats and condemnation was ever a wrong-doer made sorry and loving, but by the magnetic potency of entire forgiveness. That theology which puts hell in the foreground is impotent to help men, because it robs Christ of his highest glory and divinest power with sinners. When you

say to a man, 'Repent and you shall be pardoned,' you snatch from the poor devil the very motive that renders repentance possible, namely, the assurance that he has been pardoned. It is as if you should find a man in a desert place, famished and unable to rise, and you should say, 'Get up, sir, and come with me, and you shall have food and be made strong; if you don't do this you will die!' To be sure he will die. How can he arise? What he needs is nourishment just here where he lies, and by and by he will be able to go hence. He is the true, theological Samaritan who brings to men the Christ-broken bread of unconditional forgiveness. Nothing short of this can make true sorrow and love possible. But whether we can agree upon all these points or not, it does seem most absurd to torment one's self about a man like Boyd, who evidently has got out of the stone age and the sod-breaking period, and rejoices in love and loving deeds."

"That is what I have been thinking," said Amesbury, "and when we voted just before you came, on the question whether Mr. Boyd should be received or not, it was found to be a tie. And I, as moderator, cast the deciding vote for Mr. Boyd's reception. I voted thus not because I believe as he does about this one dogma, but because I think he is a Christian man. Were he destitute of love and building hopes of

heaven on his non-belief in hell, I should have rejected him. Nevertheless, I know that my action will make trouble. I saw as much in the cold, reproving glance of Elder Hornblende. We shall doubtless hear of this at the next meeting of the Presbytery."

Dr. Norton and Mary Randolph had met frequently during the year, and what at first may have been only admiration had, in spite of himself, developed into an all-pervading love. I say *in spite of himself*, because it had become clear to his mind that Mary Randolph was the woman whom his friend loved. Should he speak to her and have his destiny settled? That seemed the orthodox way, as men do in novels, but he loved Amesbury also. When he thought how noble his friend was, and as nearly worthy of Mary Randolph's love as any man living; and what a real vestal virgin to one like him she would be; what fitness she had for helping in the work of soul-healing, he hesitated. Would it not be downright impiety and sacrilege to think of hindering such a consummation? No, he must wait and walk carefully, for, verily, the ground beneath his feet might be holy ground. I know that the critic will say that our medical friend is a booby, and when one really loves a beautiful woman he will brook no delay, submit to no hindrances, but must take possession of the loved one, should he have in so doing to throttle a twin brother. Friend critic, thou

art thinking of quite another thing than love. Thou hast mistaken the hot, destroying lava stream of passion for the deep, cool, fertilizing river of love. Had Norton thought that he was loved by Mary Randolph he would have acted quite differently. For, as Jean Paul says, "A friend may well sacrifice to a friend a loved one, but can not surrender one who loves him."

Norton was no egotist, and therefore did not take for granted that all women, this one included, must be in love with him.

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#### CHAPTER IV.

AFTER Norton's advent, W—— boasted of three physicians. Dr. Duncan, a grand old-school gentleman with large heart, and medical skill above the average. His practice had made him rich, and his good-nature, which is another name for good digestion, had made him fat. Duncan was incapable of a small jealousy, but he was most fiercely denunciatory of everything that savored of quackery. I am almost afraid that, kind-hearted as was this son of *Æsculapius*, he would sooner see a patient die in a regular orthodox manner, than have him resuscitated by any irregular process. But never in his long practice had he, for money or entreaty,

taken a poor little defenceless life to save others from shame.

From the first, Norton had been well received by Dr. Duncan, and soon they became very good friends indeed ; the elderly gentleman taking a kind of fatherly pride in this promising young man of science.

Dr. Drake, the other medical gentleman in W—, was a lean, dark, austere man, with what always seemed to Norton a sinister expression.

Duncan asked his young friend one day, if he had met Dr. Drake in consultation, and how he had been treated by him.

"He has refused to consult with me," replied Norton, "and he never sees me that he does not look as if he would like to hold a *post mortem* examination then and there."

"I should rather he would hold a *post* than an *ante mortem* examination, if I were to be the subject," said Duncan, and a mirthful ripple agitated his rotund person.

"Four or five of his patients have employed me, without, of course, the least encouragement to do so on my part," said Norton.

"Such things cannot be helped," remarked Duncan, "but Drake will never forgive you for it, and you must take care to keep as far as possible from the hip of this medical Shylock."

"What I most dislike in Drake," continued Duncan, "is his intimacy with that infernal old scoundrel and quack, Darman, who lives, as you perhaps know, a few miles from here. The wretch has murdered more innocents than the tyrant Herod, and so far nothing has been proved against him. Oh, were he to get sick and I be called, I'd salivate him until he became as toothless as his victims."

During an evening walk, Amesbury told Norton that he was going to Presbytery the next day.

"How long will you be gone?"

"About three days. The business could be all done in one day, were it not for three or four men with whom the speech-making malady has become chronic. The bore would be intolerable, were it not for the thought that these logomachists mean well with their verbiage."

"They must think," said Norton, "that all church machinery is run by wind."

"Yes, the delusion has got away with them that articulate speech is the one devil-killing invention on earth, which, alas! it by no means is. Samson killed a considerable number of the Philistines with the maxillary of an ass, but hardly any moral devil ever gets its death-blow by the swing of human maxillary, even were it the resonant bone of a veritable maker and patentee of revivals, unless it were indirectly by down-

right *ennui*. I am learning to put large discount on all, even the most eloquent talk, unless it has real kinship with deeds. All such is smoke, that never becomes flame, which tends only to deeper obscurity, and is not in the least hurtful to devils, or helpful to men."

"I thought that our gallinaceous kinsfolk were the only creatures that did not enjoy such ecclesiastical convocations," said Norton. "It is certainly Blue-Monday with you, Amesbury: a change will do you good. *Vale!*"

As he met with the different members of the Presbytery of —— the next day, and felt the warm hand-clasps, and heard the cordial words of greeting by one and another, Amesbury was conscious of a twinge of self-reproach because of his impatient words of the evening before. After all, were not these the very men that this money-crazed world could least afford to lose. For, aside from anything they might say in the pulpit or out of it, wise or otherwise, were not the self-sacrificing lives and illy remunerated perseverance of these men in the cause of religion, a standing protest against selfishness. There was doubtless, here and there, a windy fellow with good-looks and fluent utterance whose pay for pulpit work was more than his meagre talents would have demanded elsewhere: but with the majority it was otherwise. The business of

Presbytery had got disposed of with more than ordinary dispatch, and Amesbury began to congratulate himself that Elder Hornblende had concluded not to move in the Boyd case ; but such congratulations were premature, for just then a clergyman arose and said there was an elder from the church of W—— in the house who wished to present a complaint, and moved that he be heard.

The substance of the complaint was that part of the session of the church had received into church membership a man who did not believe in a hell ; and, as we had been exhorted to hold fast the form of sound words, the persons whose names were affixed deemed themselves bound not to suffer so dangerous an error to go on unchecked.

This was enough to bring to the front all the self-constituted custodians of orthodoxy, and, in the discussion that followed, some of the weakest phases in the clerical character became painfully apparent.

The Rev. Mr. Feldspar, pastor of the church at N——, the most wealthy congregation in the whole Presbytery, asked what the pastor of the church at W—— could mean by such an unprecedented act. If such things should be permitted to go on unrebuked by the strong hand of ecclesiastical authority, the noble Calvin and dauntless Knox would not be able to rest peacefully in their graves. There were foes

enough without the camp of Israel ; it would not do to suffer them to enter the citadel and betray it to the enemy. "The man Boyd must be cast out, and if his pastor sympathizes with him in this heresy, and I am persuaded he does, he should be called to give an account of his stewardship."

Much else was said in acquiescence with the above. Had not the Pope spoken (for every Presbytery has its Pope) ? And were they not all bound to give heed to such *ex-cathedra* utterance ?

No, all were not bound to give heed. All were not believers in Popes.

The Rev. Thomas Axton, who seldom took part in the Presbyterial babblement, had some remarks to make on this subject, which were quite different from anything uttered by Feldspar and Co. Axton was in the iron-gray period of life, modest almost to the point of diffidence, much loved by those who knew him best, but one with whom a stranger did not quickly get on terms of intimacy.

Mr. Axton said that much of the talk which they had just heard seemed puerile. He knew that Mr. Amesbury held to all the doctrines of the church as much as any man who loved humanity more than mere dogmas could or ought to hold to them, and as to the reception of Mr. Boyd, he would have done the same himself, for he had just been informed by the very

gentleman who had presented the complaint that the religious character of this Mr. Boyd was above reproach. He was not simply negatively moral, but a positively good, God-serving man, and it was to be remembered that this was the reluctant testimony of one not favorably disposed toward Mr. Boyd. "As ministers, we have all doubtless received men into the church who overreach, exaggerate, utter angry words, but we do not talk of having them turned out of the church or of disciplining their pastors. Nay, there are pastors themselves who have been guilty of theft; for taking the thoughts of other men and using them as one's own is downright petty larceny, and no movement is made towards discipline. But here we stand with bitter words and threaten to unchurch a man whose worst fault is one of opinion. And this hue and cry about heresy is very finical. The clerical bosom seems to have become the constant dwelling-place of fear. The pillar of the temple of orthodoxy seems ever more in danger of being pulled down by this or that imaginary giant. And this cry of 'wolf' has not only a finical aspect in the world's eye, but an unbelieving aspect as well. For is any truth of Almighty God such a poor, weak, vagrant thing that it needs to be defended and kept alive by human discipline? Depend upon it, anything thus weak and morally valetudinarian must be a lie, or at best a half-

truth, and should get ready to vanish, even though it has been as sacred and well-worn as the much-kissed toe of St. Peter at Rome."

At the conclusion of this speech, the question was called for, and, after it had been decided that Mr. Boyd should be removed from the membership of the church at W——, Amesbury said that all the eloquent discussion of the matter under consideration had failed to throw any new light on the question, and hence had failed to change his views. He could not allow any man's conscience, nor the conscience of the whole church, to usurp the right of individual judgment. He had done what seemed to be right, and as to putting Mr. Boyd out of the church because of an error of judgment, he must say plainly that he never should do that. The man needed the church, and the church needed the man. The relation had been ordered of Heaven, and what "God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Such a thing would be worse than expelling a man from a hospital because he was like to lose an arm. Outside, and uncared for, might not the man lose his very life?

These remarks of Amesbury would have elicited further discussion had not the Rev. Mr. Axton moved an adjournment, on the ground that if they did not go then they would miss the train and have to remain another day. With some mutterings about contumacy,

the members hastened in search of satchels and umbrellas.

On their way home, Amesbury asked a lawyer, with whom he happened to be seated, — and who was an elder in Mr. Feldspar's church, — how it was that a man with such marked ability as Mr. Axton had not been called to a larger field?

"Oh, Mr. Axton is too modest; lacks brass, and his views are too advanced to be popular. To be fifty years in advance of one's time, is worse than to be fifty years behind. In the last case, a man will have plenty of company and sympathy; in the first case, he has neither company nor sympathy. I have heard," continued the legal gentleman, "that Axton is at work on a book, the title of which is to be 'Sacred Nonentities.'"

"Indeed!" said Amesbury; "any book by him will be well worth reading. This is my station, — good-day, sir."

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## CHAPTER V.

AMESBURY heard from Norton, in whose office he stopped as he went from the depot, that they were invited to Dr. Duncan's that evening. "And," said Norton, "I have a case that needs particular attention,

and fear I shall be denied part of my anticipated pleasure."

Dr. Norton made no further remark about this case to his friend. No well-bred doctor does talk, even to his wife, about his sick folks ; nevertheless, this patient had been much in his thoughts since he had seen her a few hours before.

That morning, as he was about to drive away on his round of calls, Norton had been summoned in haste to see Christina Holstein. The young lady was the only daughter of one of the wealthy families in W—, and was much admired for her beauty, although her appearance was more correctly described by the word *pretty* than by the word *beautiful*. Ever since Norton had known anything about the family, the young lady had been receiving the attentions of Robert Ramsey, a medical student, who was employed as clerk in Dr. Drake's drug store. The girl having fallen suddenly and alarmingly ill, they had sent for Norton, — Drake, who was their family physician, not being at home.

The Doctor was not long in ascertaining what was wrong with his patient. He also found, by dint of question and the examination of the contents of some vials in the room, that a persistent, though ineffectual, effort had been made to elude shame by the destruction of life.

When her mother had gone out of the room for a

few minutes, the young woman acknowledged all, and begged Dr. Norton to rescue her from the coming horror. She would sooner die than face the shame!

Norton told her very kindly, but decidedly, that what she demanded was impossible, and that she must stop taking drugs. He would give her something to counteract the bad effects of what she had been taking. Such work was murder, and perhaps suicide!

When his patient was more quiet, he left, telling Mrs. Holstein, whom he met in the hall, that he would come again in the evening, at which time he intended to inform the mother entirely in regard to his patient.

But this very evening, before the party supper could be eaten or the joy of being near Mary Randolph realized, Norton was summoned four miles into the country, from which place a return was impossible before midnight.

The following morning, after breakfast and a brief glance at the paper, Norton went to see Christina Holstein.

Instead of finding his patient better, as he had expected, he perceived that an accursed sacrilegious crime had been accomplished. In answer to his rapid questions, Mrs. Holstein said that in the night Christina got so much worse that they had sent for Dr. Drake, who said when he came that it was too late, and that he would have nothing to do with the case.

"But *some* wretch has had to do with the case," said Norton, "and a double murder will be the result of his infernal work." For he saw that the young woman could live only an hour or so, having already passed into a comatose condition. Mrs. Holstein denied all knowledge of anything out of the way in the matter, but Norton thought he could read guilt in the cold, proud face of this woman, who, to save the family name, could see her child killed.

"Poor young thing!" thought Norton; "how could it be well with her? Begirt as her short life had been by such untoward influences,—selfish lust on the part of her lover,—murderous pride on the part of her mother?"

In anger Norton left the house, determined to have the outrageous business investigated; but in less than five hours from this time he found himself under arrest for two great crimes. The charge had been made by Mr. Holstein on the testimony of Dr. Drake, who had made a *post-mortem* examination, and before dark, notwithstanding Amesbury's strenuous effort to get the bail matter arranged, John Norton, M. D., was an inmate of the — county jail.

In the evening Amesbury and Dr. Duncan came to see him, W—— being only a few miles from the county town. The bail had been fixed at fifty thousand dollars, and Amesbury, who by the death of an aunt had

recently become heir to seventy-five thousand dollars, wished to assume the whole responsibility; but Dr. Duncan would not be denied this opportunity of expressing his confidence in the integrity of his young medical friend.

"This is devilish awkward business," said the old doctor, when he had been made as comfortable as Norton's present lodgings would admit of.

"Mrs. Holstein has sworn that you were the only doctor called until Drake was brought, and Drake has testified as to the condition in which he found the patient. By making you the victim, Mrs. Holstein will escape all danger of implication in the crime, and get much sympathy as a deeply-injured woman. The real criminals in this business are Ramsey, Darman, and Mrs. Holstein. Drake happened on the scene just in time to help them out and avenge all his old scores."

"When is the next session of court?" inquired Amesbury.

"Six weeks from to-day," replied Dr. Duncan; "and Holstein has secured Colonel Wing to assist the District Attorney. Wing is the most dreaded criminal lawyer in all this country. Have you decided who will conduct your case?"

"No; will you suggest a person? I have no ac-

quaintance with the legal talent of the county. Indeed, I need a detective more than a lawyer."

"We must secure Squire Flint, who is the keenest man at the bar, and is a sort of natural detective. He will find a clue if there is any. I shall drive over here to-morrow at 10 a. m. You will then be 'out of limbo.' We will see Flint, and secure him."

Amesbury insisted upon passing the night with his friend, but Norton utterly refused to permit it.

"There is hardly enough air here for one man, and no way to secure a draft through the beastly place. I won't have you breathing up my oxygen. I shall get on grandly. Good-night!"

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## CHAPTER VI.

THE party at Dr. Duncan's had proved a social success. Indeed, since Agnes Duncan was old enough to give direction to her father's household, the hospitality of the Duncan home had been charming. For, in addition to a faultless taste in all matter of domestic detail, Miss Duncan was a social genius. One could scarcely imagine a company of persons so incongruous and illy assorted that she could not organize them into a social cosmos. Whatever latent capacity of harmony

and social beauty might exist, she had the intuition to perceive and the magnetic power to evoke.

A truly great thing has been done, — a real, creative miracle performed, when a Shakespeare or a George Eliot, out of the raw material of their own imagination, create men and women and make them act nobly in some ideal world for a brief space ; but I call her a more benign genius who can take the stubborn elements of village society and, in spite of the petty jealousies, chronic feuds, and natural incongruities, send them home at the end of four hours better pleased with each other, having found in their little world many qualities worthy of respect, helpful, neighborly possibilities, before quite unsuspected.

Agnes Duncan did not need a beautiful exterior to make her a charming woman. The difference between her and Mary Randolph is best seen in the way each sought to accomplish the same thing, — the reclaiming of a wayward sister, — a work which both of these noble women recognized as *their* work, and the work of every true sister of women.

Miss Randolph would begin by telling of Christ, and the recuperative power that dwells alone in Him.

Agnes Duncan would work day and night to get the unfortunate one again recognized by society ; and thus, by the influence of all that is best in social life, lead back to God.

Who shall say which is the better way?

Amesbury had determined that at the very first opportunity he would ask Mary Randolph to become his wife. He knew that Miss Randolph regarded him with favor, but whether it was a natural sympathy for one trying to advance the cause in which she was so much interested, or a more personal sentiment, he did not know. So, on the way home from the party, he gave verbal expression to his love, and spoke of all the sweet thoughts of an ideal blessedness that had been gathering for so many months around the hope of winning her love.

"Dear friend, the love of a true man is something to be proud of all one's life, but I can give you only friendship. Let us be friends and helpers, as before."

And Amesbury, who knew how entirely devoid this woman at his side was of all shallow coquetry, felt that whatever his feelings might continue to be toward her, that she could never be to him more than a friend. Should he, because he could not be a Crœsus and have all he coveted of the golden currency of love, be a churl, and fling from him the silver pieces of this noble woman's friendship? *No!* They should be friends. If the magnetic, sacred, betrothal kiss could not be his, he would not deny himself one friendly kiss of the fair hand that was extended to him when they said good-night.

Mr. Boyd, who had in some way heard of the discussion of his case in Presbytery, and of the possibly unpleasant results that might come of it to his pastor, came one day and told Amesbury that he would go away from W—. He had an offer of a situation, and should have gone before had it not been for his pleasant church relations.

"By no means, friend, unless it is greatly to your advantage to go," said Amesbury. "How should we get on without you? We have no one that could keep your Sabbath School class together, and Shaefer and Sidell would gravitate back to the whiskey dens if you should let go of them at this time."

"You put far too high a value upon my poor efforts, Mr. Amesbury. Indeed, if I have done any good, you may thank Miss Randolph for it. It was she that showed me the Christ. I shall never forget the day she came to read the Bible to me when I was getting over the fever two years ago. What she said about Christ forgiving and loving touched me, and in her prayer Christ seemed so real to her, and her talk with him so natural, that I looked around expecting to see the Saviour in the room."

"Yes, she is an angel," said Amesbury, "but you must promise me not to make arrangement to leave here without letting me know."

"I will do that, but *you* shall never suffer in any way on my account."

## CHAPTER VII.

DR. DUNCAN was punctual at ten o'clock the next morning, and Norton having been released on bail half an hour before, they immediately went in search of lawyer Flint, who said, when he had heard it, that the case looked very bad.

"Do you know the servant girl at Mr. Holstein's? Perhaps she might throw some light upon the matter."

"Yes," said Norton, "her name is Susan Kiefer, a daughter of my first patient at W——, and I believe her to be a good, truthful girl. Shall I ask her to come over and see you?"

"Do so, by all means; for, unless we can get a clue to this business, your chance of escaping the penitentiary seems very small indeed. The offence for which you are to be put on trial is a growing evil, and hitherto the offenders have escaped, and the court is bound to make an example of the first one against whom any proof shall be brought."

All this, of course, did not sound very cheering to Norton; but whatever might be the issue of this business, he had determined to go about his work as was the behest of a man and a Christian.

Dr. Duncan insisted that his young friend should

dine with him that day, and as he saw him at the piano with Agnes, giving voice to a gay college song, he said to himself, "There is good stuff in that boy. It's a devilish shame that the life of such a fine fellow should be blighted. I never saw a man of his years handle a surgeon's knife as he can."

Of course the whole matter — the death of poor Christina Holstein and Dr. Norton's arrest — had received the widest publicity. It had been a perfect godsend to newspaper men and gossips. In only two places however, where he had sick people, did Norton notice any difference. In these the gentlemen paid him, and said he need not come again ; and, as in both cases the patients were nearly well, he did not mind it. Indeed he respected the men the more. For, on the supposition of his guilt, it was the duty of every true man to drop him.

The first time he met Mary Randolph, Norton was embarrassed in spite of himself. What did this woman, whose opinion was more to him than the rest of the world, think of him? Could *she* believe him guilty? The thought that perhaps she might embarrassed him, but his embarrassment disappeared the moment their eyes met. He read in her face only confidence and sympathy. No vestige of dark suspicion clouded the lambent ray of those beautiful eyes. What cared he

for the incubus of untoward public opinion if this woman believed in him?

Norton had kept at work and the weeks had gone, and now only a few days remained before the trial. He had seen his lawyer again, but the interview was far from encouraging. The legal gentleman had found Susan Kiefer unable to furnish any clue. She did say that Mrs. Holstein was very reluctant to let her come, and questioned her closely as to her errand. Surely there did not seem much to build a defence upon.

The evening after this interview with Mr. Flint, Dr. Norton started to go to a rheumatic patient, who lived on the outskirts of the town, but before he had reached the house he was met by a man, who told him that the lock-keeper's wife was very sick, and they wanted him at once. The place was about a mile distant, and the best way to reach it was by the tow-path of the canal. Norton, who had struck into the rapid pace so natural to him, soon found he must walk more slowly to accommodate his companion's style of locomotion. The night was quite dark, and he could see very little of the man's face, but the sound of the voice and the outline of the shoulders both indicated a tremendous chest. But the fellow walked badly (not unlike a sweenied horse), and carried a huge stick to facilitate his progress.

They had tramped on thus, until Norton thought

they must be near the place, when the man said he must rest a minute. "My cussed legs are getting worse every day," and he sat down on the trunk of a fallen tree, and made room for Norton to sit beside him. Norton had scarcely taken his seat, when he felt himself seized from behind and jerked over backwards. He tore his right arm loose from the encircling clasp of his unseen assailant, and grasped him by the throat with a grip that soon would have finished him, had not the rascal who had been sitting beside him now struck him a blow on the head with his stick.

When Norton recovered his consciousness his hands were tied, and one of the villains was saying, "Bill, I thought you had finished him, but he's coming around again. It might just as well have been done here as anywhere else."

"Yes, a nice job we would have had, toting a dead man all the way to the river! We'll make him walk, and fix him when we get him on the spot," said the sweenied rascal.

Norton knew that the end of the stick must have struck the ground, else the blow delivered by the broad-shouldered scoundrel would have killed him outright. He had been only stunned, and in a few minutes was able to walk.

With one man on each side of him, they proceeded across the fields in the direction of the river. During

their progress, the rascal who had first assailed Norton asked the other if he had got "the bottle filled." "I am as dry as an ant-hill, and my neck feels as if it had been run over by a cart. This fellow has a grip like a bear-trap!"

"No," said the other, "I got no liquor. I met my man before I had a chance to go to the tavern, and I took him on the wing."

This talk about the bottle reminded Norton that he had a bottle. When he left his office he had put a bottle containing sulphuric acid in his pocket, intending to replenish the cell of a galvanic battery which had been left at the house of the rheumatic patient before spoken of.

By this time the party had reached the river, and one of the men loosing a boat from among some bushes, they were soon in it, and crossing the Susquehanna, a job quickly accomplished by such expert watermen as these evidently were.

The night growing lighter as it advanced, Norton recognized the place where they landed as the Counterfeiter's Cave. An open space of half an acre of level ground, accessible only by water. Above and below, for nearly half a mile, a high, perpendicular cliff came down into the very water.

In that part of this three-sided stone enclosure most remote from the river, was a cave, above the mouth of

which the rocks frowned down more than a hundred feet. Twenty years before, the cave had been occupied by two counterfeiters, one of whom had been murdered by the other, and from this fact, doubtless, the place had gained its reputation of being haunted, and was almost never visited.

Norton recognized it by the descriptions he had heard of it, and it struck him now as a weird, uncanny place, well-suited for the perpetration and concealment of a deed such as his companions evidently contemplated.

"You spoke," said he, "of wanting something to drink. I have a bottle in my pocket, and, if you will untie one of my hands, we will see what it is like."

"No," said one of the men, "you can drink well enough without that. Where is the bottle?"

Having taken it from Norton's pocket, the fellow placed it in his hands, which were tied together in front of him.

Fear that the contents of the bottle might be poisonous kept the rascals from appropriating it before they had seen Norton drink of it. But they pressed up close to him to see that he did not draw too deeply of its contents, should it prove to be all right. After pushing the glass stopper out with his thumbs, Norton raised the bottle slowly toward his lips, but with a motion quick as a magician's he dashed its dreadful

contents into the eyes first of one and then of the other of these villains, and sprang aside just in time to escape a bullet from a navy revolver which one of them held in his hand.

Crouching behind a bush, Norton commenced to untie with his teeth the cord that confined his hands, while each of the wretches lifted up an unearthly howl of agony. So blinded and confused were they that they were unable to even find the river until after much delay, and to their horror found small relief when the water had been reached by them.

In crossing the spot upon which the three had been standing so recently, Norton saw, by the light of the moon, now well up and luminous, the pistol which the man in his anguish had flung down. He took up the weapon, and went to find the men. They were both lying on the sand, like reversed alligators, each with his head in the river, heedless of each other, conscious only of pain and their dreadful sense of weakness. Two more entirely subdued and helpless wretches could hardly be imagined.

Pity moved in Norton's breast, and the healing instinct got strong within him. But first he must know who had instigated these men, and why. He told them if they would tell him all about it he would do his best to save their eyes. He found that one of them had been hired by Ramsey, and the other was

Darman's hostler, and they were to have fifty dollars apiece and all the money they might find in Norton's pockets, which they were told would be a considerable amount.

"Ramsey came yesterday to see Darman, and I heard him say he feared the Kiefer girl knew something about their having been at Holstein's the night before the death of the daughter. But if they could get you out of the way, every one would think you were guilty and had 'skipped' to get rid of the penitentiary, and the whole business would come to an end without a trial."

"Do either of you know—can you swear that Darman was at Mr. Holstein's the night of July 15th?" said Norton.

"I can," said the broad-shouldered man, "Ramsey sent me with a buggy to bring him. We drove up the alley that runs back of Mr. Holstein's lot, and I took him through the gate. Mrs. Holstein met us in the garden."

"Come," said Norton, and they were soon in the boat and recrossing the river.

The walk back through the fields was tedious, as the men had to be led like children. Dr. Norton remembered that as they came down through the fields he had noticed several great white heaps of lime, put there for fertilizing purposes. To one of these heaps

he led the suffering men, and sprinkled the dry, fine lime over the wounds, greatly to the relief of the almost frantic wretches. Having neutralized the fierce acid by this efficient alkali, they continued their journey toward the town with much less pain. When they reached the office, Norton applied other remedies, and placing a buffalo robe on the floor, with carriage cushions for pillows, he made his guests quite comfortable.

He then washed the blood from the wound on his own head, and lying down on a lounge in the inner office, was soon fast asleep.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

IN the morning Dr. Norton sent a dispatch requesting his lawyer to come to W—— at once, and as soon as he had attended to the wounds of the men and ordered some food for them, he sent for the justice, and had their testimony taken down and warrants issued for Ramsey and Darman.

He told the men, whose names he found to be Oyster and Shuck, that, as they were likely to be the greatest sufferers, he would make no charge against them, and would do his best to heal them. But if

they wished to save even one of their eyes, they must abstain from whiskey. Before night, Norton was informed that Ramsey had fled, but that Dr. Darman had been arrested, and was safe in jail.

Norton felt that Dr. Drake had something to do with these recent events, but of this there was not likely to be any proof. A nice thing indeed for him to be rid forever of a man so much in his way, and one he hated so intensely, and, at the same time, to see his old rival, Dr. Duncan, lose fifty thousand dollars, for he did not suppose the parson-fellow had any means.

With much difficulty, Norton persuaded lawyer Flint to see Mrs. Holstein, and warn her against persisting in her false testimony — to give her the choice between telling the truth or being indicted as an accomplice of Ramsey and Darman in the death of Christina.

Flint promised to do this, with very bad grace, saying such false kindness only multiplied crime. Mrs Holstein was a bad woman, in whom inordinate pride had displaced natural affection.

“But,” said Norton, “she must have suffered terribly already !”

“Not much. A nature so shallow and selfish as hers would be touched by an indictment *particeps criminis* more than by any consciousness of wrong-doing. I will do what you ask, however, for the sake

of Mr. Holstein, who is an excellent old gentleman, though terribly henpecked."

"What outrageous logic! You almost convince me that the woman ought to be sent off, just for the sake of this long-suffering spouse!"

It is almost superfluous to add, that on the day of Norton's trial, the prosecution broke down entirely. Colonel Wing had no chance to explode his rhetorical bomb-shell, and, seeing that he had no case, he wisely refused to make any examination of the witnesses, leaving the whole matter in the hands of the District Attorney.

Norton's lawyer said that he would not insult the intelligence of the jury by making an argument, in a case so clear as this one. The testimony given had vindicated the innocence of his client so clearly, that words were not needed.

The judge, instead of charging the jury, congratulated the prisoner because his innocence had been so entirely proved, and his honor so clearly vindicated.

The jury, without leaving the room, rendered the verdict of "Not Guilty."

But the trial of Dr. Darman, which took place soon after, had quite a different issue, — the verdict being twenty years in the Eastern Penitentiary. It came out in the course of the trial, that the rascal had been practising with only a bogus diploma, which, as the

judge said in his charge, would be sufficient to send him to the penitentiary. Notwithstanding all that Norton could do for them, Oyster and Shuck each lost an eye.

Oyster, the fellow who had seized him from behind, Norton kept as stable-man, perceiving that the one healthy instinct left in him, was admiration for a good horse, by which slender cord he hoped the man might be led to some nobler sentiment.

Dr. Duncan took Shuck for his gardener. Norton thought that in the pure atmosphere of that well-ordered home, the man's demoniacal besetments might in time relax their hold of him.

Dr. Duncan remarked of him, after some observation, that the fellow could see more with one eye, than he had been able to with both. "By Jove! You were lucky to have that bottle of S. O<sup>3</sup>. in your pocket. It was devilish good eye-water for such wretches! Your galvanic machine did some good once, at all events!"

The use of electricity was the one thing in Norton's practice that did not commend itself to Duncan's judgment.

"Mere waste of time! Any other counter-irritant was just as good!"

And, when Norton hinted at the use of electricity

in surgery, he called it "Infernal charlatanism — worse than the hot irons used before the time of Harvey."

One day, the Monday after he had presented the claim of Foreign Missions to his congregation, Amesbury met Mr. Boyd, who handed him ten dollars for the cause. Fearing that his motive might be no higher than personal friendship, Amesbury said,

"How is this, Mr. Boyd? One would suppose that with your notions of future punishment, you would think the work of foreign missions a waste of time."

"No indeed, sir. I think it a grand work. For are not the finding and loving of Christ the best things that can happen to a man, and the sooner they happen the better? This life ought to stand for something, and I do not see how a man whose twenty or eighty years are spent without finding Christ, can ever catch up and be what he might have been. He has lost time. Shall we refuse a little money to give this start and prevent the waste of this life? Who knows that the waste of this life can ever be made up through all eternity? But excuse me for going on in this way, when you know about such things so much better than I do. I have had an offer to go as foreman in the car-shops at L——, and, as I shall get five hundred dollars more per year, I think I shall go. I shall have more money for good causes like that of which we

have been speaking. Then there is Deacon Hornblende and a few others here in W—, who will enjoy life so much better when I am gone. I expect they will sing that hymn which a certain rustic choir sang at a funeral by request of the widow, 'Now we rejoice to see the *cuss* removed.' I shall not try to connect myself with any church as a member, but shall work just the same. You must come to see me when you are in L—."

"No fear but that I shall do so," said Amesbury, who felt that in the person of the man with whom he had just parted, he and the whole community had sustained a loss by the subtraction of a real, moral unit from the sum of their spiritual forces.

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## CHAPTER IX.

"Do you know, Mr. Amesbury, that Agnes Duncan is the best worker in our church ;" said Mary Randolph, when her pastor had thanked her for some new impulse which she had given to the church work among the young.

"I know Miss Duncan is a splendid woman, but I was not aware that she was particularly interested in religious work."

"You are as blind as a bat. Why, more young people respect religion and good morals because of her influence than because of any one person known to me. They all quote her, and she has the most charming way of managing them."

"Such praise on the part of a man would cause me to think he was in love with Miss Duncan."

"I am in love with her. No one can know her as I know her and not love her."

"When did you hear from your father, Miss Randolph?"

"Yesterday, and he spoke of some trouble they were having with the miners in S—. I wish he would sell the mine and come home."

"It might be a wise thing to do, for the coal regions are in a very unsettled condition, and I fear the Mollie Maguires are bound to make mischief there," said Amesbury.

It was only the next day after the above brief conversation that Dr. Norton received a note from Mary Randolph, asking him to go with her to S—. Her father had been shot. They would start at once in a private conveyance.

Norton was soon at Mr. Randolph's, where he found two powerful grays harnessed, ready for the journey, and in a few seconds more Mary Randolph and himself were driving rapidly toward S—.

To Norton the hours consumed in the journey seemed only minutes, so aglow with sympathy and tenderness was his heart made by mere proximity to this loved one. Fertile of resources, as he could be in an emergency ; self-possessed, as he always was when work had to be done, Norton was as timid as a girl in the presence of Mary Randolph, and constantly solicitous lest in any way he should mar the joy of his friend Amesbury.

Of course the conversation on the road was mainly about the wounded man.

Mr. Randolph, it seems, had been doing all he could to break up the Mollie Maguire society in S —, and had told the men that if they did not quit the organization he would send and get English miners.

Miss Randolph felt sure the shooting had been done by one of these Maguires.

Dr. Norton found Mr. Randolph suffering from an ugly wound in the neck. The ball, having struck the clavicle, had glanced and penetrated the neck, fortunately escaping the arteries and the *cervical vertebra*. It was but the work of a moment to locate the ball, after which no time was lost in extracting it. He could not say there was no danger, as Mr. Randolph was a man of sixty. A good constitution, reinforced by the might of a spartan will, were facts greatly in the

wounded man's favor, and on these he would encourage the loved one to build large hopes.

There was another wound to be looked after when Mr. Randolph's hurt had received due attention. Leo, the Newfoundland dog, who for years had been Mr. Randolph's constant companion, was shot by the same pistol that came so near killing his master.

There had been trouble at one of the breakers a mile from the village, and Mr. Randolph had gone to see what could be done with the men. On his way back, through the twilight, a man came out of a dense thicket of calmia that skirted the path and shot him.

The old gentleman did not fall at once, and doubtless would have been fired on again had not Leo bounded upon the man, who then had all he could do to keep the noble animal from seizing him by the throat, and only got loose after he had shot him.

The superintendent hearing the shots, on hastening to the spot found Mr. Randolph in the road, the dog crouched bleeding beside him, licking his unconscious face.

Norton ministered to the brave dog as if he had been a brother man, and the noble fellow looked his thanks from his expressive brown eyes, refusing to stay anywhere but in his master's room. For the present Norton determined to remain at S—, going once or twice a week to W— to see his sick folks.

The grateful smile that shone upon him, when he had communicated this plan to Miss Randolph, made him superlatively happy for days. No matter if it should turn out that this woman *did* love his friend, and it was ordered of heaven that she should be Amesbury's wife, he would continue to love her with a devotion from which selfishness should be entirely eliminated. He should live to be of service to her, and Amesbury and himself should not love each other less, but all the more, on account of her.

This was the kind of Platonic, ideal future by which Norton tried to fortify himself against the possibility of future heart insolvency.

The fever caused by the wound diminished gradually after a few days, and all the symptoms in the case of Mr. Randolph pointed toward recovery.

From the first Norton had insisted that Miss Randolph should leave the sick man to the care of others at least once every day, and seek the vitalizing influence of the free unhoused air.

At first he remained with Mr. Randolph on these occasions, and Mary went with the superintendent; but, when the patient had improved a little, Norton himself had the unspeakable pleasure of being her companion in her daily walks.

It was in one of these perambulations that Norton spoke of Amesbury with so much affection, that Miss

Randolph asked playfully, "Which is Damon and which is Pythias? I have heard you and Mr. Amesbury speak as I supposed men never did speak of each other. But the survival of such virile love is one of the most beautiful things in society."

"Whether such a friendship as exists between Mr. Amesbury and myself can be reckoned a thing of beauty or not, it surely is a good thing. Is not the truly beautiful an outgrowth of the good? Indeed, are not the true, the beautiful and the good only different names for the same thing? just as earth, globe and world are different names for the planet upon which we stand! But grand as this love between men is, it is not sufficient," said Norton. "Before he is satisfied man craves two other loves — the love of woman and of God."

"Should not the greater include the less in this as in other things?"

"No; the greater but makes the necessity of the less more apparent."

"But what would become of this virile love if two such masculine friends should happen to love the same woman?"

Norton almost groaned aloud at this probing of his heart-wound.

"If such affection was really virile and not simply puerile, and if the regard for the woman was really the

celestial thing, love, why, then, because of the upward lift of such noble sentiment, the two should act toward each other not less, but more, as it behoves true friends always to act. Assuredly it would be thus if the third, the Godward affection, had begun to lift them. 'For love is not love which alters, when it alteration finds.' The love of God does not alienate the hearts of human friends, and if what is called 'love-making' was not so interpenetrated by lower elements, its tendency, like divine love, would be toward whatever is true, beautiful or good. For these are of the household (the *freunschoff*) of love."

"You just spoke of making love. The word *make* has a harsh sound in that connection, and savors too much of mechanical operations. Love is an inspiration and a growth."

"Yes," said Norton, "it is a new life, and from its natal hour has all eternity in which to grow."

"It seems stupid that your friend has not fallen in love with Miss Duncan; indeed that all the gentlemen who know her have not found themselves in the same category, for a nobler and more beautiful woman is not to be found in all this country."

"What!" thought Norton, "is this glorious being really jealous, and is she taking this way to quiz me about the heart status of my friend? I shall not believe it."

"You just now, and with the best of reasons, objected to the word make in connection with love, and yet you speak of falling in love."

"Yes, but perhaps I used the word in its astronomical sense, and meant the attraction of gravitation by which one heavenly body is drawn, or made to fall toward another."

"*Tres bien!* Perhaps the reason why my friend's heart has not gravitated toward Miss Duncan is, that a celestial body of larger magnitude has been tugging at it."

"Do, then, gentlemen talk to each other so confidently of all such things?" said Mary Randolph, with averted face.

"No, but when one is stricken with a consuming malady, it is not necessary he should talk in order that a diagnosis of his case be made. The fact would become patent enough, were he as dumb as Zachariah."

"But it is worthy of note that such cases become convalescent marvellously soon," remarked the young lady.

"Yes, and so they should, else were they doomed to quick destruction. To love and be unloved is to be only a hemisphere — a half world among the heavenly bodies. In nature there exists no such

abortive phenomenon. All the forces above are working toward the spheroidal."

Often thus, in these walks, did the inmost soul of Norton stand on the very verge of expression; but his sense of honor—nay, his other love, kept from eruption the Vesuvius of affection that swelled within him.

This man, who could read in the hue of a cheek or the gleam of an eye what morbid processes were going on in the life-centre, could make nothing out of the crimson flushes and drooping eyelids of the beautiful woman that walked beside him.

In Mary Randolph, Norton saw a Juno, but in himself no Jupiter. To worship, therefore, was all that was left for him to do, and thus let whatever might be god-like within him grow.

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## CHAPTER X.

ON one of his visits to W—, as he drove up to his office, Norton saw his servant-man, Oyster, limping along toward him, the whole man so metamorphosed in external appearance as to be almost beyond recognition.

In answer to his master's question as to what had

happened to him, the fellow straightened himself up and said :

"I am in the insurance business, and it pays if a person can look quite shaky, as though he might drop off at any time, for then everyone will want a policy on him. In four days I have got ten dollars from ten men, just to let them take out a thousand dollars apiece on me, and I will stick to it until I make another hundred, if I can stand it. It's mighty hard work making believe I have the asthma and the palsy — but it pays, and when I get all the ten dollars I can I will astonish the policy-holders by getting well in a jiffy. Insurance is all the go here in W——. Some of the religious swells are in it as well as the rest."

Vexed as Norton was at the wretched duplicity of the fellow, he could not refrain from mirth. He felt that any moral reason why such a thing should not be done would be wasted on the man in his present soul-status.

"But don't they have an examining doctor?"

"Yes, there was an old fellow they called Dr. Somebody, but he wanted his fee and did not object much, so they clapped on the policies and forked over the ten dollars. There will be as many policies on me in another week as there are scales on a shad."

"But don't you know you run a terrible risk by

making it to the advantage of such men to have you dead? Take my advice and quit this business, and look out for yourself or they will have you put out of the way."

"By jingo! I had not thought of that! Do you suppose they would kill a fellow?"

"Such things have been done," said Norton with a grave face.

Amesbury returned with Norton to S—. He remarked — by way of excuse for not having gone before (a fact which had struck Norton as somewhat strange), that he had hardly been himself for three or four weeks.

"A fair gamester," said he, "with one fling has knocked down everyone of the ten-pins in my heart's alley. It turns out that after all these months of bowling, I have succeeded only in hitting the one in the lady's heart marked 'friendship.' But, it was all fair play, and it only remains for a fellow to find out if it really is 'Better to have loved and lost, than never to have loved at all.'"

Norton, whose soul loathed cant of all kinds, ventured no word of consolation to his disappointed friend, but immediately began to speak of other things.

"You folks in W— seem to have gone mad over this speculative life insurance. How is it that our legislature permits such infernal business to have the sanction

of legality? These buzzard societies are a disgrace to the whole Commonwealth!"

"Yes, the other day I helped to bury a poor old fellow who, they said, was killed by the cars, and upon whom were policies for several thousand dollars, held by parties of doubtful reputation. I made all the inquiry I could, but found out nothing."

Mr. Randolph was glad to see his minister, and when Mary said she had begun to fear that her pastor had forgotten them in their trouble, Amesbury said (unheard by Norton), that he had been trying to pull himself together and let his heart-wound granulate a little.

"Why did you not go to Miss Duncan? The touch of my friend's hand would have removed every vestige of the scar before this time."

"You cold-blooded enchantress! Do you suppose a man's heart is like the negative plate of a photographer — if the impression don't suit, it can be washed off and used for another?"

"No, the love-machine is not a camera obscura, but a camera revealer, and, unless two good impressions are made, there should be no delivery of goods."

"Why should not two well-disposed persons begin the matrimonial life, trusting that love will follow?" asked Amesbury.

"But what if it should never put in an appearance?"

"That, certainly, would be awkward — nay, it would be horrible. Dr. Norton tells me your father will be in a condition to be taken home next week, if he improves as he has reason to hope he will. Be assured your friends will be glad to see you. The poor and sick ask very longingly when you will be back. Miss Duncan has been very kind to them, but some of them think her cold and proud."

"Simple creatures! Miss Duncan's nature is too royal for their comprehension. She is a born queen — I am a born nurse. Sick people may like the nurse — all the healthy ones worship the queen."

"I confess myself on the sick list and terribly in need of a nurse," said Amesbury.

"Your malady is imaginary and needs but the touch of the royal sceptre to dissipate it."

"I don't believe in dissipation. Here is Leo. Dr. Norton has been telling me about him. What a noble fellow he is! How his brown eyes overflow with kindness!"

"Yes, but they become very phosphorescent when he is angry," said Norton, who had just come in.

"To me, the wonderful intelligence and affection of the dog and horse, furnish one of the strongest arguments against the doctrine of evolution," remarked Amesbury. "Here are animals most like man mentally, but most unlike him bodily. The anthropoid

apes and the other animals that bear most resemblance to man in physical make, resemble him the least, intellectually. How is such a fact accounted for in the theory of evolution as it is held by its most radical exponents?"

"Perhaps," said the Doctor, "if these apes and the gorilla had been with man as long as the dog and horse, they might be to-day in advance of these in mental qualities."

"I cannot think that the superiority of the dog to the monkey is the result of domestication. The ants have never been domesticated, and yet, perhaps, they excel all the brute creation in intelligence. Mr. Darwin, himself, says that by many authors and in many respects, ants are regarded as the prototype of man. Houzeau places the ant nearest to man in regard to social condition. Belt, a most radical evolutionist, in speaking of the foraging ants of Nicaragua says, 'Perhaps if we could learn their wonderful language, we should find even in their mental condition they rank next to humanity.' When we remember that these are precisely the most insignificant of creatures, and that they are bodily as far below man as it is possible to get, it makes one pause before accepting the theory of evolution in its totality. With such facts before us, it is not quite the spirit of true science to take so much for granted."

"True science takes nothing for granted," said Norton. " *Scio* means to know. Evolution is as yet only a grand suggestive guess, but one for which every man of brains is sincerely thankful."

"Yes, for such guess, such imaginative outreach, is as useful in unfolding the facts of nature as it is in constructing the ideal creations of the poet."

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## CHAPTER XI.

ON their way back to W——, at the inn where Norton always had his horses watered, the two friends were accosted by a person with a peddler-like air of business and a decidedly Dutch accent, who, having fished up a great bundle of papers from the bowels of a capacious satchel, said he was the travelling agent for the Mount Zion Mutual Life Insurance Company, of Stickler Grove.

"The company is as sound as a nut, and has never hesitated to pay every loss. It is as sure as death, gentlemen, and I have some first-class policies which I should like to sell to you. Here is one of a thousand dollars on an old lady living in Nip-town. She is seventy-five years old, quite deaf, and had the numoney last winter. She has her

home with a son-in-law, who also has a policy of two thousand dollars on her. It's a fine chance to make a nice sum in a few months. Here is another policy, all signed and stamped, for a thousand dollars, on a man in W—— by the name of Oyster. He has lost one eye, has got the asthma, and is as bad a case of palsy as you ever saw, — and more than all that, he gets drunk whenever he can get the rum. The man that gets that policy will be lucky."

How long the fellow would have gone on in praise of his merchandise it is impossible to say, had not Dr. Norton cut him short by vehemently wishing "the devil had his policies and all the rascals connected with the infernal business."

"This is as bad as Tetzel and his indulgences," said Amesbury. "They ought to be called societies for the suppression of old folks. I understand one is being formed to include babes. *O tempora! O mores!*"

Norton found that no further insurance had been placed upon his man Oyster during his absence. The fellow had evidently been frightened by the grim light in which the matter had been placed. For ever since the night at the Counterfeiter's Cave the creature had the utmost confidence in whatever Dr. Norton said or did, and there had sprouted from the moral ash-heap of his spiritual being a feeble twig of affection for his master. The sentiment was not to be compared to the

large, noble, unselfish love that dwelt in the mind of the dog Leo for his master, but to despise this day of small things were indeed unwise and cruel.

Norton determined to water the sickly little plant by the dew-drops of kindness. The experiment was worth while as a psychological study, even if it failed of any higher eventuation.

Norton called at Dr. Duncan's to thank that gentleman for attending some of his sick folks during his absence, and found Amesbury in the parlor practising a piece of sacred music with Miss Agnes, which they intended to sing the next Sunday afternoon at a Sabbath School concert. The singers had superb voices and good expression, but above all they had clean, worshipful hearts, and hardly ever before had Norton been so much impressed with the power in music to beget devotion as while listening this morning.

The greeting of the genial old doctor was *ore rotundo*. He always used a volume of sound such as an Alpine traveller might employ in an attempt to communicate with a companion on another peak of the mountain ; but there was nothing harsh in the good doctor's voice any more than there was in his large heart. The whole man was simply huge.

"Mr. Amesbury tells me that my friend Randolph is getting on well, and expects to be back to W—— in a few days. I'm right glad the rascal's bullet did not

cut his wind. It will not be safe for him there any longer. Why don't he sell out? He has money enough, but I suppose digging coal is like making pills; men don't stick to it so much for the money as because they can not endure being idle. Come over to the office, and let these warblers shriek to their hearts' content. That girl has always had the musical craze. At one time I had all I could do to keep her from falling in love with her music teacher."

"More likely the teacher fell in love with her," said Amesbury.

"Yes, and as soon as I saw the morbid symptoms I prescribed change of air. I tried to get a good dose of jalap into the fellow, but did not succeed."

This was said while they were moving toward the other part of the house, and from still greater distance he roared to Agnes, "The gentlemen will stay for dinner!"

Before the two had finished their discussion about the diphtheretic tendencies of scarlet fever, dinner was announced.

When some one noticed the fine quality of the celery, Dr. Duncan said that among the other good results of Norton's nocturnal adventure, was the finding for him of an excellent gardener, — "if Agnes here don't get him started out as a temperance lecturer."

"Has he really quit drinking?" inquired Norton; "if so, he has done better than my poor fellow."

"Yes, Dr. Norton," said Agnes, "he has not tasted whiskey for nine months, and he is so much improved you would hardly recognize him."

"Have they insured him yet?" inquired Amesbury.

"Insured!" roared Dr. Duncan; "the man who would come here on that business would need to be insured. But that reminds me: Dr. Drake has that poor, half-witted fellow, who takes care of his horses, insured for five thousand dollars. I'd sooner take my chance as color-bearer in the most bloody battle ever fought on earth than to be in the poor wretch's shoes. And Elder Hornblende has taken out a policy of two thousand dollars on his old aunt, Mrs. Weeks. Why don't you preach against this thing, Mr. Amesbury?"

"It must be done," said Amesbury. "Of course, I can say nothing to benefit Hornblende; he will think it a *lex talionis* movement, — an attempt to get square in the Boyd matter."

"No difference what such a thin-souled creature thinks! It is the duty of every minister in Pennsylvania to show the evil tendencies of this horrid business."

Because of some office work, Norton was forced to excuse himself immediately after dinner, and it was

well for poor Oyster that he did so, as he found that individual suffering intensely. In answer to his questions, the Doctor found that the fellow had discovered a bottle of whiskey in the oats box at the stable, and had imbibed freely.

"How did it get there?" inquired his master.

"I don't know, — it smelt like good stuff, and I took a *big* horn."

"Have you the bottle?"

"Yes," — and the fellow reached behind the lounge, upon which he was lying, and brought up a flask.

Norton put some of the whiskey in a glass, and poured into it a few drops of an aqueous solution of sulphuretted hydrogen, which he happened to have on hand; and when he saw the bright, lemon-colored precipitate, he knew that the whiskey had been drugged with arsenic. He took down a stomach-pump and went over to the man, whose groans were becoming incessant, and said, "This all comes of your insurance; the whiskey is full of poison, and may kill you in spite of all I can do, — here, I must use this."

After this operation the sick man was made to swallow a spoonful of hydrated susqui-oxide of iron, which dose was repeated frequently until Norton felt that recovery was probable. As soon as he had sufficiently recovered to talk freely, Oyster swore on the Bible,

which he asked Norton to bring, that he would never touch whiskey again.

"You had best keep that vow," said Norton, hoping that the shattered forces of his will might, under the leadership of self-love, be marshalled into an attitude of successful resistance. "The men, whose interest it is to have you die, know that you like rum, and through this failing they will try to kill you."

And let it be said, by way of encouragement to the worst inebriate, that even this much-enslaved Oyster was able to keep his vow.

Of course, it is impossible to say how much the unimpaired integrity of his master's will had to do with this victory, for, after this new proof of Norton's power over evil forces, Oyster never seemed quite safe unless he was within easy reach of his master; and, annoying as it sometimes was, Norton humored the wish, perceiving in it the outreaching of a feeble soul for human help,—nay, let us say Divine help. For is not this one of God's ways of helping the weak, even through the might of his strong ones? The one hope of thousands in their unequal life-battle, is that some healthy soul shall draw near in that mysterious, psychological proximity, bringing heaven-sent reinforcement.

My friends! You who think that money is everything, and imagine that by your gifts to this or that benevolent scheme you are giving marvellous momen-

tum to every good thing on earth, and have come to believe that you and your dollars are indispensable to Jehovah, do not you see that God's great need, and that which circumscribes him most, is the want of healthy human souls to act as moral life-preservers to shipwrecked humanity? Your gold is of small help to weak swimmers. A friendly arm whose moral potency has not been withered through greed or lust, this, verily, is our world's prime necessity. Such an arm the man Oyster found, and what wonder that he clung to it tenaciously!

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## CHAPTER XII.

ON his return to S—, Dr. Norton found Mr. Randolph still improving, and there was nothing to prevent his removal on the morrow. In Norton's absence, a New York capitalist had purchased the mine, and to the great joy of Mary Randolph, her father would not have to come again to S—.

Norton and Mary Randolph would take one more walk together in the bracing mountain air. It was the last of October. The foliage had received the finishing touch of Nature's brush, and was gorgeous indeed! The landscape was visible through the indescribable,

amethystic haze of Indian summer, nowhere seen more perfectly than among the Alleghenies.

"Since your father's recovery has been assured, these days here in S —, have been halcyon days to me," said Norton. "I almost regret that they are at an end."

"I feared the very reverse of that might be true, of one so entirely engrossed in his profession as Dr. Norton, and I have been almost expecting to see *ennui*, impatience, or some of the many manifestations which you lords of creation make, when bored beyond endurance."

"Am I, then, such a mere animal in your estimation? Have you not seen that there is no work so pleasant as being of service to you? No place so dear as where you are? No companionship so delightful to me as yours? Oh, Mary! tell me that this service and this companionship may be continued forever, and the round globe holds not a gladder heart than mine!"

"That were a small favor to grant to one who has become so dear to me as you have, John."

"Oh, thou heavenly one! The heights of Olympus seem tame when compared with the altitude to which your love raises me."

"God grant that from this, our mount of transfiguration, we may not, as some have, descend into the dark

valley of everyday life, never again to behold even an Indian summer of true love."

"Do'st thou apprehend any such winter of discontent, dear Mary?"

"No, John, love casts out fear!"

Why attempt to go further with our friends? Have they not commenced life's journey auspiciously? When from mountain tops and adjacent fields you have looked here and there upon two noble rivers, their crystal waves sparkling as they move onward through green banks, to the place where they are to unite, you know without having gone further than the point of their *dehouchure*, that a deeper, broader and more majestic river must emerge and flow on beyond. So when two such deep, clear life-streams as John Norton's and Mary Randolph's have been joined, beyond the point of confluence there will be a mighty augmentation of depth and beauty. It would, indeed, be delightful at this juncture to re-launch our little biographical bark; and, as we sail down, to mark the increments which this life-river receives by the flowing in, ever and anon, of the babbling brooklets of humanity, and see all the desert places that are made green and beautiful by the onward flow of these blended life-rivers; but, with no better helm than a sputtering pen, it were the part of wisdom not to venture further. And for much the same reason, the writer refrains from

speaking further of the friend, Amesbury, who, unlike the canine of manger notoriety, embraced Norton when he was told by him that Mary Randolph had crowned his life with her love.

How much this magnanimous joy of friend Amesbury was due to the charms of Agnes Duncan, now daily unfolding before the clerical vision, it is quite impossible to say. Nor is it possible to describe how the thread-like pulse in the soul of poor Oyster, became fuller by transfusion from the moral life of his master. Or, how the almost still-born soul of the gardener, Shuck, was nourished into self-mastery by his godmother, Mrs. Amesbury, better known to the reader as Agnes Duncan. Of the other persons mentioned in these pages, together with the readers, let this one wish be written,

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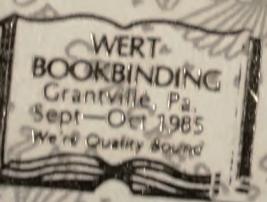
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